

Message Text

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TAGS: PINT, SF
SUBJECT: STATE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT DIEDERICH'S OPENED THE SOUTH AFRICAN
PARLIAMENT ON JAN 27 WITH AN ADDRESS IN WHICH HE SOUGHT TO
REASSURE THE POPULATION THAT THE OUTLOOK FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S
FUTURE IS NOT STARK. AT THE SAME TIME HE MADE CLEAR THAT THE
SAG DOES NOT INTEND TO ALTER ITS CHOSEN COURSE. END SUMMARY.

1. ACCOMPANIED BY THE USUAL POMP AND CEREMONY, SOUTH
AFRICAN STATE PRESIDENT NICOLAAS DIEDERICH'S OPENED THE 1978
SESSION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN PARLIAMENT IN CAPE TOWN ON
JAN 27. IN HIS OPENING ADDRESS, DIEDERICH'S SOUGHT TO
REASSURE SOUTH AFRICANS THAT DESPITE THEIR GROWING INTERNATIONAL
ISOLATION, SOUTH AFRICA REMAINED BASICALLY STRONG, SECURE,
AND MORALLY UPRIGHT.

2. DIEDERICH'S OPENED HIS ADDRESS BY REFERRING TO WHAT
HE CALLED THE "TOTAL ONSLAUGHT" BEING WAGED AGAINST
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SOUTH ON THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, PSYCHOLOGICAL
AND SECURITY FRONTS, NOTING ESPECIALLY THE GROWING
THREAT OF URBAN TERRORISM. HE PARTICULARLY LAMENTED
THAT WESTERN COUNTRIES "THAT HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN
COUNTED AMONG OUR FRIENDS" HAVE NOW JOINED "THE LONG-
STANDING VENDETTA AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA."

3. DIEDERICHS SAID THAT THE BEST WAY OF COUNTERING CRITICISM AND SUBVERSION WAS "THE UPLIFTMENT OF ALL THE INHABITANTS OF OUR COUNTRY, THE IMPROVEMENT OF THEIR SOCIAL CONDITIONS AND WELFARE, AND THE INSTITUTION OF A POLITICAL DISPENSATION WHICH WILL BE FAIR AND JUST TO EVERY POPULATION GROUP." IN ORDER TO DO THIS, HE ADDED, THE SAG WOULD CONTINUE ON ITS PRESENT "TRIED AND TRUE COURSE." HE THEN REVIEWED BRIEFLY THE "PROGRESS" WHICH HAD BEEN MADE TOWARD THIS GOAL, EMPHASIZING THE PLAN TO GIVE COLOREDS AND INDIANS "NOT ONLY A FULL SAY IN THEIR OWN AFFAIRS, BUT ALSO THE OPPORTUNITY OF EXPRESSING THEIR VIEWS ON MATTERS OF COMMON CONCERN AND OF ASSUMING JOINT RESPONSIBILITY IN THIS REGARD." (FOR THE FIRST TIME COLORED TROOPS TOOK PART IN THE MILITARY PARADE.)

4. TURNING TO THE ECONOMIC SITUATION, DIEDERICHS NOTED THAT EXTERNAL PRESSURES COULD HAVE A BENEFICIAL EFFECT BY MAKING SOUTH AFRICA MORE SELF-RELIANT. BOYCOTTS, FOR EXAMPLE, WOULD OPEN NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOUTH AFRICAN INDUSTRIES. HE EMPHASIZED THAT SOUTH AFRICA'S ECONOMIC SITUATION REMAINED SOUND. REVIEWING 1977, HE NOTED THE SUCCESS SOUTH AFRICA HAD HAD WITH A POSITIVE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS AND IN LIMITING INFLATION. AGRICULTURE AND MINERALS, ESPECIALLY URANIUM, PROVIDED GREAT HOPE FOR THE FUTURE. UNEMPLOYMENT, MOREOVER, WAS LOW AND INDUSTRIAL PEACE PREVAILED. ALTHOUGH IMMIGRATION HAD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FALLEN IN 1977, "A SATISFACTORY IMMIGRATION RATE HAS NEVERTHELESS BEEN MAINTAINED." IN SUM, DIEDERICHS SAID, THE REPUBLIC CAN PRIDE ITSELF ON HAVING "THE RESOURCES AND THE EXPERTISE TO COPE WITH THE CHALLENGES AHEAD."

5. CONCLUDING WITH HIS ORIGINAL THEME, DIEDERICHS REPEATED THAT DANGERS FACED SOUTH AFRICA IN THE COMING YEAR. SOUTH AFRICA, HOWEVER, "HAS GIVEN UNMISTAKABLE PROOF OF ITS MORAL COURAGE AND RESOLUTION IN PREVENTING OTHERS FROM UNDERMINING AND DESTROYING ITS CONFIDENCE IN ITSELF." AS A RESULT, THE THREATS FROM OUTSIDE SHOULD BE SEEN AS CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES.

6. COMMENT: DIEDERICHS' ADDRESS, WHILE REAFFIRMING THE SIEGE MENTALITY WHICH HAS DEVELOPED IN SOUTH AFRICA, AT THE SAME TIME SOUGHT TO EMPHASIZE THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF SOUTH AFRICA'S PRESENT SITUATION. THE SPEECH APPEARED AIMED AT REASSURING THE POPULATION THAT ALL IN ALL THE COUNTRY IS NOT IN BAD STRAITS AND THAT HOPE FOR THE FUTURE CERTAINLY EXISTS. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, HE REITERATED THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO PROCEED ALONG ITS CHOSEN PATH.

7. FULL TEXT OF DIEDERICH'S COMMENTS ON NAMIBIA AND RHODESIA
SENT BY SEPTTEL.
BOWDLER

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